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THE GULL



Golden Gate Audubon Society

Berkeley, California

Volume 74 Number 10 November 1992

AN EVENING WITH BATS

Join bat biologist Patricia Winters and several small guests for our November program in Gotham City, make that Berkeley. The program will begin at 7:30 p.m., **Thursday, Nov. 12** at the Northbrae Community church, 941 The Alameda.

In her slide illustrated lecture, Ms. Winters will talk about the ecology of bats, and why bats are disappearing faster than any other group of mammals. Within the last 20 years, 80% of bats have been lost in California and worldwide due to pesticide poisoning, habitat loss and persecution by humans. We will learn how common misconceptions about bats and rabies are not true, and how to create more bat habitat.

Assisting Ms. Winters with her presentation will be four or five live bats. Since bats communicate with "clicks" of a frequency too fast for human ears, Ms. Winters will translate this "bat-speak" with a "bat detector." This is a device which slows down the ecolocation sounds to a frequency that we can hear. Ecolocation sounds differ from species to species, so we will learn how bat biologists differentiate the sounds of different species which fly at night. For those who become completely hooked on these interesting creatures, we will also find out how to identify night roosts.

Ms. Winters has been working with bats for 25 years, and has recently co-founded the non-profit "California Bat Conservation Fund." She gives many school and public presentations in order to help demystify and create appreciation for these mammals. She also runs a rehabilitation center for injured, lost and orphaned bats, and has been known to make "house calls" for homeowners with bat problems.

—JOELLA BUFFA

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT REAUTHORIZATION

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, most recently reauthorized in 1988, is again up for reauthorization in 1992. The ESA was established to protect, manage and save from extinction, species which are in peril and also their ecosystems upon which they depend. The US Endangered Species List includes all species and subspecies which have been registered as endangered or threatened.

Although extinction is a natural phenomena, recent history of human interference has significantly increased the rate of extinction and has severely

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FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

Saturday, November 7—Birds of Strybing Arboretum, Golden Gate Park. (Alan Ridley).

Wednesday, November 11—Mini-trip to Aquatic Park, Berkeley. (Wilcox/Spoelman).

Saturday, November 14—Hayward Regional Shoreline. Meet at the end of West Winton Ave. in Hayward at 9 a.m. for about four hours of birding. This location is alive with shorebirds, ducks and grebes. There are also grassland species to be seen. Dress warmly and bring a scope if you have one. Lunch is optional. Leader: David George (510) 339-0765 (✓).

Sunday, November 22—Palo Alto Baylands. Meet at 8:30 a.m. Take Hwy. 101 south to Palo Alto. Exit at Embarcadero and drive east toward the yacht harbor and Bayland Nature Center. After entering the Refuge meet in the parking lot on the right just before the Duck Pond. (The Duck Pond is on the left, beyond the Palo Alto Airport turnoff.) Bring lunch, scopes, and clothes for rain and mud. We should see waterfowl, shorebirds, rails, and possibly Burrowing Owls. Leader: Bob Hirt (408) 446-4478. (✓)

Thursday, November 26—Eighteenth Annual Thanksgiving outing to Point Reyes National Seashore. Meet at 10 a.m. in the parking lot of the Point Reyes National Seashore Visitor Center (one mile northwest of Olema, off Hwy. 1). Or, for carpooling—meet at

9 a.m. at the Larkspur Ferry Terminal, in west end of section H.

We hope to see alumni of previous years, and welcome newcomers to this tradition, for a leisurely day of birding and hiking. We generally see an excellent variety of waterfowl, shorebirds and landbirds.

The day will end with a Thanksgiving dinner at 4:30 p.m. at the Olema Farmhouse (about \$14) in the town of Olema. No reservations needed for trip or restaurant, just show up with clothes for cool windy weather, a scope if you have one, and a light lunch. Leader: Barry Spitz (415) 454-2769. Please do not phone for reservations (unnecessary) or for carpooling (See below). (✓)

Saturday and Sunday, November 28-29—Gray Lodge and Sacramento Wildlife Refuges. For this two-day trip, meet on Saturday at 9 a.m. in parking lot #14 at Gray Lodge.

Drive east on I-80 15 miles beyond Davis to route 99 exit. Go north 52 miles on route 99 to the town of Gridley. Turn left (west) on Colusa Hwy. and continue five miles to Pennington Rd. Turn left and follow signs to Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuge. Proceed through the checking station (an increased charge for the entrance fee is anticipated), and continue to parking lot #14.

We will caravan through the refuge on Saturday, and through the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge on Sunday.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$10 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$20 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

**The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 15, 1917,
and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.**

The Gull deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.

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Allow two and one-half hours driving time from the Bay Area. (AAA map of Sacramento Valley Region is helpful.) For accommodations at the Blue Gum Willows Motel off I-5 at Willows (916) 934-5401 is suggested (there is no lodge at Gray Lodge), and camping is possible at the State Park in Colusa. Bring lunch, scopes, and clothes appropriate for the valley in November (chilly). Heavy rain cancels trip. Leaders: Peter and Dolores White (510) 229-1714. \$ (✓)

Saturday, December 5—Monterey Bay and Coastal Areas. Meet at 9 a.m. in Monterey at the foot of Coast Guard Pier. (Bring quarters for parking.) We will bird this area then drive north, stopping at various spots including Moss Landing. We will be looking for loons, grebes, gulls, alcids, and rocky coastline species. Bring lunch and a scope if you have one. Leader: Don Starks (408) 226-4134, eve.) (✓)

Wednesday, December 9—Mini-trip to Lake Merritt, Oakland. Meet at the Rotary Science Center at 9:30 a.m. Go east on Grand Ave., cross Harrison St. and turn right on Bellevue Ave. to Lake Merritt. Continue to the Rotary Science Center, on the right—just beyond the duck pond. This is a good opportunity to review waterfowl. Lunch optional. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301 and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Trips marked with \$ go to parks and other sites that require an entrance fee.

Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (✓). See below.

Problems: If you need a ride or can take a passenger, or if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, call Russ Wilson, Field Trips Committee Chmn. (510) 524-2399.

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

ESA REAUTHORIZATION

(continued from page 169)

reduced the number of species on the planet. Today, in the San Francisco Bay Area, habitat destruction is the greatest threat to various plant and animal species, many of which are already registered as endangered or threatened on the US ES list.

With reauthorization of the ESA drawing near, the Golden State Wildlife Federation has organized a California Endangered Species Coalition. The coalition consists of a group of environmental and conservation organizations, including GGAS. The goal of the coalition is to coordinate a California response and to support national efforts towards strengthening the Federal Endangered Species Act. Currently the ESA is under attack by timber, real estate, oil, mining and other industries. As a result, there are at least five bills proposed by US representatives which are misleading in their attempts to amend the Act. In reality they would permanently cripple the ESA and weaken species protection. Presently, only one bill (HR 4045), introduced by Representative Gerry Studds, D-MA, would actually strengthen and reauthorize the Act. The California Endangered Species Coalition is making an energetic effort to strengthen HR 4045 or a potentially new, stronger bill that would guarantee warranted species and habitat protection.

The ESA is the crown jewel of our nation's environmental protection laws. It is critical that supporters of endangered species protection and environmental protection take a strong stand in support of the ESA in the months ahead. The GGAS conservation committee will continue to keep you current on the reauthorization process in *The GULL*.

P. K. KLEINTJES

OBSERVATIONS: SEPTEMBER, 1992

Fall is such a nifty time, particularly for lovers of shorebirds and seabirds—not only are there lots of them around, with great potential for unusualities (a new word for the occasion), but in the case of shorebirds, there are all those youngsters, fresh off the nest and so lovely to look at in their bright, spangly juvenal plumage. This is not to say that lovers of landbirds are slighted, but spring is really their time and fall is just bonus points.

This has been quite a wonderful fall, full of heart-stopping, crowd-pleasing rarities, most of them seen by lots of people. On September 4, John Kelly and Chris Wood were birding along the coast north of Bodega Bay. They crossed the Russian River and stopped to check a small, boggy pond alongside the road; the pond was uneventful, but as they went to climb back in the car, there sitting on a fence beside the vehicle was a black and white bird with an enormously long and fluttery tail, a **Fork-tailed Flycatcher**, one of those striking species that always catches your eye as you page through the field guide. This is a Central and South American breeder that wanders in the late summer and fall and is occasionally found along the Gulf and Atlantic coasts. But never before in California. By Saturday morning there were cars and bodies from all over California as the twitchers massed at Bridge Haven. The bird was obligingly visible emerging from the willows to feed from the fence lines and to be chased by the Barn Swallows. It stuck around through the 8th, but that night the weather changed, the fog blew in and the bird was not seen again.

Meanwhile, Monterey Bay was teeming with Shearwaters, particularly unusually high numbers of Black-vented and massive flocks of Sootys. On the 7th, Rich Stallcup and a band of

stalwarts cruised through the numerous bands of Sooty Shearwaters looking for the unusual amongst the usual. The tension level rose when Rich spotted a white head in the midst of all the black, but it was snowy white and the rest of the bird was pure ebony and when it flew, there were asymmetrical white spots on the wings—an albinistic, melanistic Sooty Shearwater. As the boat approached the next flock, however, Alan Hopkins noted that there was a whitish head showing there also, a whitish head that proved to have a white fore-crown, with a dusky, streaky hind-crown and nape, a gray-brown mottled back and a large pale bill: a **Streaked Shearwater**, the 6th record for Monterey Bay, also the 6th record for North America—quite an accomplishment considering the bird breeds off the east coast of Asia from Japan south to the equator and has only recently begun to be seen off of northern Australia. What is believed to be the same individual was seen again on a pelagic trip on the 19th (DLSH) and just off of Fisherman's Wharf in Monterey on the 27th and 28th (fide DLSH, fide SGI).

In far northern California, Lake Talawa, in Del Norte County, as many as **three Eurasian Dotterels** were seen between the 8th and the 12th (ADB, BY, CaL). In 1986, hundreds lined up at the Spaletta Plateau to see the first mainland California record of this bird (there had been one on SE Farallon in 1974); in 1987 another individual was briefly glimpsed, also at the Spaletta Plateau; and now, five years later, we have **three** in Del Norte County at the same time. Eurasian Dotterels are not numerous anywhere in the world, so all of a sudden to have three in California where they are so exceedingly rare is a feat of some note. A little further south, at the Eureka Sewer Ponds, a **Little Stint** and a **Long-toed Stint** were found on the 16th (JCS). The Little Stint

remained through the 22nd. Again, these are birds of exceeding rarity in California—there are two prior records of Little Stint and one of Long-toed Stint. Unlike the Dotterel, however, these are identification horrors—sorting them out from Western and Least Sandpipers (and separating Little from Rufous-necked Stint) requires critical observation and identification skills. These birds probably occur here oftener than is credited, but finding the one individual in a flock of 1,000 (or 20,000) peeps is not a sporting betting proposition.

There's more. Late in the day on the 15th, a group of birders found a **Wilson's Plover** at Moss Landing State Beach (DR, CKf, TEa). They watched for a while and then went to alert the world, leaving the bird unattended. When they returned, it had, of course, disappeared. The next morning it was nowhere to be seen, causing some anxiety amongst those who had come running, but finally it reappeared in the late afternoon, accompanied by a **Mongolian Plover** (DR, mob). The Wilson's Plover ranges south from Baja and is seen occasionally in San Diego; this is the most northern record in California. The Mongolian Plover breeds in Asia and has reached California less than a handful of times. The Mongolian Plover stayed through the 20th; the Wilson's until the 27th.

Birdathoners Dave Shuford and Jules Evens, seeking maximum species numbers to raise money for PRBO, stopped at a corral just outside Nicasio early on Sunday the 27th, and discovered a **Northern Wheatear**, a little black, white and gray charmer with a peachy breast and diagnostic white "T" on its tail, which it spreads and flaunts at every opportunity as it flits from rock to rock (or post to post, as the case may be). Another Wheatear, thought to be the "Greenland"

subspecies, never before seen on the west coast, was found on S.E. Farallon the day before (PP), and the assumption is that they are one and the same bird, but there is no guarantee. Again, there is less than a handful of records of this bird for California. The Nicasio bird was seen again on the 29th from a great distance (RS), but not after that.

Monterey Bay is full of birds. A **Laysan Albatross** on the 26th (RS) was the first September record for this winter-occurring bird. Flesh-footed Shearwater (3); Short-tailed Shearwater (2); Wilson's (1), Fork-tailed (5), Leach's (1) and Least (up to 20) Storm-Petrels; Long-tailed Jaeger (up to 12 on a single trip!); South Polar Skua (8); and Xantus' (5) and Craveri's (6) Murres were all reported. A **Red-billed Tropicbird**, hoped for rather than expected in times of warm water, was seen a mile off of Pt. Joe on the 10th (BW fide DLSh). The **Brown Booby** was last seen on SE Farallon on August 29; that same day, another Brown Booby flew over Mountain View Forebay (MJM); and on the 31st, Rich Stallcup was counting jaegers at the mouth of Tomales Bay when his eye was struck by a distinctly un-jaegerlike creature, a **Red-footed Booby**, which flew around Tomales Point and off toward the deep.

The **Garganey** at Mountain View was last reported on the 22nd (mob); and two Harlequin Ducks remained at Cannery Row in Monterey (mob).

The previous accounting of shorebirds should be sufficient for most occasions, but there were more: three Solitary Sandpipers in Monterey County (SBT, fide DR, fide RC, MiF); **Bar-tailed Godwit** at Abbott's Lagoon through the 24th (mob) and another at Lake Talawa on the 14th (JCS); two Stilt Sandpipers, Pt. Reyes (AW) and Coyote Creek (mob); four Buff-breasted Sandpipers and eight Ruffs,

from Humboldt to Monterey Counties (mob). A Franklin's Gull remained at Coyote Creek through most of the month (mob); another was at Crowley Lake in Mono County on the 20th (JLD). Moss Landing had a juvenile Black Skimmer on the 18th and 19th (KP, TEa), a perk for those who went in search of rare plovers.

There were three White-winged Doves; reported this month: Bodega Bay (BHi); Moss Landing (DES); and Big Sur (fide RC). These occur annually in very small numbers, almost always along the coast. A total of eight Least Flycatchers is a high number for this period; four Tropical Kingbirds is more usual. There was a Yellow-green Vireo on SE Farallon on the 29th (PP) and single Red-eyed Vireos there on August 30 and at Point Reyes on September 18 (RS).

WARBLERS

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER

1	9/19	Pt. Reyes	JSC, TCo, THK, JBo
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TENNESSEE WARBLER

2 total	8/31-9/3	Pt. Reyes	RS, JM, RHa, NB
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1	9/7	San Francisco	JsC
1	9/7	Marin Headlands	CLF
1,1	9/8-9, 13-16	Hayward Shoreline	RJR, DFW
1	9/21	Carmel River	RC

NASHVILLE WARBLER

1	9/21	Santa Cruz Co.	LTa
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VIRGINIA'S WARBLER

1,1	8/30, 9/4	Pt. Reyes	AME, MBu, DPo, EH
1	9/6	Coyote Creek	PMJ
1	9/30	San Francisco	BD fide ASH

LUCY'S WARBLER

1	8/30-9/29	Moss Beach	RSTh, mob
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NORTHERN PARULA

1	8/28	Big Sur River	fide RC
1	9/3	San Francisco	DPM
1	9/3	Inverness	RHa
1,1	9/12-14, 17	Humboldt Co.	BY, JCS
1	9/19	Sacramento	LED
1	9/21-22	Bodega Bay	DN
1,1	9/28, 29	San Mateo Coast	JMcK, SBT

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER

1,1	9/12, 19	Pt. Reyes	JM, THK, TCo
1	9/18-27	Carmel River	TEa, NL
3 total	9/19-29	San Mateo Coast	DJK, PJM, BS, AME, MiF, AWi
1	9/20	Bodega Bay	DN
2	9/21	San Francisco	JSC, ASH
1,1	9/26, 29	SE Farallon	PP

MAGNOLIA WARBLER

1	8/28	SE Farallon	PP
4 total	8/30-9/29	Pt. Reyes	DPo, THK, RS, JM
1	9/4-5	Moss Beach	FG, RSTh
1	9/20	Bodega Bay	DN

CAPE MAY WARBLER

1	9/27-29	Pt. Reyes	EDG, KB JM
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BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER

1	8/31	San Francisco	RLa
1	8/31	Pt. Reyes	AD

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER

1	9/29	Moss Landing	SG1
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BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER

1,1	9/20, 29	San Mateo Coast	RSTh, SBT
1	9/25	San Francisco	ASH
1,1	9/26, 29	SE Farallon	PP

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER

1	9/18	Pt. Reyes	RS
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RAIRIE WARBLER

1	9/1	SE Farallon	PP
1	9/12-14	Humboldt Co.	BY, JCS
1	9/27	Monterey Co.	NL

PALM WARBLER

1	9/26	Pt. Reyes	RA
1	9/28	Stinson Beach	KH

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER

1	9/18	Pt. Reyes	RS
1	9/29	SE Farallon	PP

BLACKPOLL WARBLER

13 total	8/30-9/29	Pt. Reyes	mob
1	8/31	Briones Park	JAs
3 total	9/4-30	San Francisco	DPM, ASH JSC
4 total	9/9-29	San Mateo Coast	RSTh, BS
1	9/12	Humboldt Co.	SBT
3 total	9/14-27	Monterey Co.	BY
1	9/17	Coyote Creek	DR, NL, fide, RC
1	9/18	Newark	SBT
2	9/19	Bodega Bay	RJR
			D N

BLACKPOLL WARBLER

4 total	9/7-20	San Mateo Coast	RSTh,DJK
3 total	9/17-19	Pt. Reyes	RS,JSC
1	9/26	Marin Headlands	fide JLD

AMERICAN REDSTART

6 total	8/25-30	SE Farallon	PP
3 total	8/29-9/21	Bodega Bay	DN
7 total	8/30-9/29	Pt. Reyes	mob
1,1	9/2,29-30	San Francisco	DU,JMcC, JSC
			TEa,RC

1,1	9/18-29,21	Monterey Co.	TEa,RC
3 total	9/24-29	San Mateo Coast	mob
1	9/27	Rodeo Lagoon	DCo
2	9/29	Coyote Creek	SBT
1	9/30	Bolinas	KH

WORM-EATING WARBLER

1	6/17-9/6	Coyote Creek	PJM
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OVENBIRD

1,1	8/25,29	SE Farallon	PP
1	9/1	San Mateo Coast	BS
1	9/14-19	Richmond	KAL,JM
1,1	9/18,19	Pt. Reyes	RS,JSC, THK
1	9/25-28	Santa Clara	MiF,NF

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH

1	9/12	Hayward	RJR
2	9/13	Carmel River	DR
1	9/15	Humboldt Co.	JCS
1	9/16	Capitola	DLSu
1	9/20-21	Bodega Bay	DN

CONNECTICUT WARBLER

1	9/26	SE Farallon	PP
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MOURNING WARBLER

1	8/30	SE Farallon	PP
1	9/20	Pt. Reyes	GMCC,JM

HOODED WARBLER

1	9/10	San Francisco	RLa
1	9/17	Pt. Reyes	RS
1,1	9/19,27-30	San Mateo Coast	DJK,AE,mob
1	9/11-12	San Mateo Coast	RSTh,JM, JSC
1	9/15	Santa Cruz Co.	KKe fide
			DR

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT

1	8/30-9/5	Pt. Reyes	DPo, fide
1	9/13	San Mateo Coast	JM,LLu GDeg

There continued to be good numbers of Summer Tanners and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks reported. A Painted Bunting near Santa Cruz on the 15th (KKe fide DR) is an exceedingly rare find, but these colorful creatures often are judged to be escaped cage-birds. A Green-tailed Towhee was in the same area on the 16th (CKf). Clay-colored and

Brewer's Sparrows and Lark Buntings were reported in good numbers. A LeConte's Sparrow on SE Farallon on the 26th (PP) was such a good bird that it cost the island team's birdathon sponsors extra. There were a number of coastal sightings of Yellow-headed Blackbird and an Orchard Oriole made a Bolinas appearance on the 4th (KH). What a month!

ADDENDUM: In June, a pair of Red-throated Loons was thought to have nested in Pacifica, producing a single chick which was later found dead. This would have been the first breeding record for California. The dead chick was studied carefully and eventually was determined to be a very small adult. The first breeding record for California is yet to happen.

OBSERVERS: Richard Ackley, John Ascher, Nora Bain, Alan D. Barron, Florence G. Bennett, James Booker, Mary Brezner, Ken Burton, Mark Butler, Rita Caratello, Josiah Clark, Terry Colborn, Debbie Cotter, J. Scott Cox, Maryann Danielson, James Danzenbaker, Gary Deghi, Barbara Deutsch, Ann Dewart, Jon L. Dunn, Todd Easterla, Leo Edson, Alan M. Eisner, Ann Everdi, Carter L. Faust, Mike Feighner, Noreen Feuss, Frank Gardner, Edward G. Greaves, Helen Green, Keith Hansen, W. Edward Harper, Roger Harshaw, Art Hewitt, Mark Homrighausen, Elina Holst, Alan S. Hopkins, Dawn Joley, Terry Joley, Dan J. Keller, Ken Kellman, Clay Kempf, Theodore H. Koundakjian, Rick Lawton, Nick Lethaby, Leslie Lieurance, Calvin Lou, Kay Loughman, Michael J. Mammoser, Guy McCaskie, John McCormick, John McKean, Peter J. Metropulos, Joe Morlan, Dan P. Murphy, Dan Nelson, John Osner, Kathy Parker, Benjamin D. Parmeter, John E. Parmeter, David Powell, Jean Puffer, Peter Pyle, Jean M. Richmond, Robert J. Richmond, Don Roberson, Barry Sauppe, Debra L. Shearwater, Rich Stallcup, Tim Stauffer, John C. Sterling, David L. Suddjian, Arthur Taber, Lester Tamimoto, Scott B. Terrill, Ronald S. Thorn, Debbie Utter, Alan Wight, Michael Wihler, Anna Wilcox, Brent Williams, Dennis F. Wolff, James Yurchenko, Bob Yutzy.

—ANN DEWART

NEOTROPICAL MIGRANT BIRD CONSERVATION AUDUBON'S ROLE

"Partners in Flight," the Neotropical Migratory Bird Program, (see p. 138 *The GULL* for Sept.) includes a myriad of federal and state natural resource agencies, university researchers and non-governmental organizations such as National Audubon. It is the first time a collaborative national inter-agency and non-governmental effort is working toward the same goal—to determine the status of neotropical migrant species, their habitats of greatest concern, and to develop a plan for long-term ecosystem management and protection in both North and Latin American countries. The program is composed of eight major working groups: monitoring, research, education and outreach, international partnerships, Northeast, Southeast, Midwest and Western regions. The program recently sponsored a training workshop, Status and Management of Neotropical Migrants, in Estes Park, Colorado. The workshop was attended by over 600 participants and had strong non-governmental organization representation by National Audubon staff and chapter leaders (including GGAS).

National Audubon is taking a prominent lead in the "Partners in Flight" with Stan Senner serving as co-chairman of the program. Senner was recently appointed the director of "Birds in Balance," the neotropical migratory bird program of National Audubon. He comes to Audubon with over 20 years of experience in field ornithology and conservation policy. Senner says "Audubon complements the PIF program by bringing in birding expertise and enthusiasm from over 516 chapters in Latin and North America, a broad constituency, to educate and lobby for habitat protection."

At the Estes Park meeting National Audubon's Stan Senner and Susan Carlson established an Audubon Chapter network by which chapters can all work together to make a concerted effort for monitoring and protection of Neotropical Migrants. In addition, a federal interagency and non-governmental organization California State Working Group was developed. Both GGAS and PRBO will take an active part in it. At GGAS we are already aiding efforts with our annual Christmas Count and the development of Breeding Bird Atlases. In the future we hope to do even more!

P. K. KLEINTJES

Editor's Note: GGAS was represented at the workshop at Estes Park by Ms. Kleintjes.

FROM MONO LAKE:

INSTEAD OF COMPLYING WITH THE COURT'S ORDER TO RESTORE THE STREAMS FEEDING MONO LAKE, THE LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER CONTINUES TO STALL WITH LEGAL GAMES...

Late March: LADWP objects to temporary irrigation system for pilot riparian plantings that were already in the ground on Lee Vining Creek. Court orders the system installed.

Late April: LADWP objects to implementing spring fish population monitoring program. After hearing on May 11 and 12, court orders study program to proceed.

Early May: Restoration work bogs down when LADWP provides construction crews for only 5 hours a day. May 12th Judge Finney orders LADWP to provide equipment and crews to get the work done on schedule.

Late May: Final work plans for 1992 restoration in lower Lee Vining Creek are approved by litigants, LADWP abstaining from the vote.

Early June: LADWP hires new consultants critical of the restoration program to give other litigants a tour of Rush and Lee Vining Creeks.

Mid June: LADWP proposes reconsideration of the already approved summer 1992 restoration work in lower Lee Vining Creek.

Late June: LADWP vetoes proposed restoration monitoring programs in favor of its own consultants' proposal.

Early to mid-July: In three days of hearings and a judicial tour, LADWP brings consultants to argue against proceeding with summer restoration plans. The court rules that the work "shall resume forthwith."

September and October: More hearings on the monitoring programs and the planning of Rush Creek restoration. But for now, the restoration of lower Lee Vining Creek will go forward!

—MONO LAKE COMMITTEE

LAST DITCH AT LOWER KLAMATH

We visited the Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge on a warm smokey day in early August. The wind had shifted and smoke from several arson caused fires pressed on the basin. Visibility diminished to a couple of miles and the sky turned a sick pinkish gray. Another shift in the wind and the curtain lifted, but still the horizon was lost in smoke.

From our camp at Lava Beds we had driven past Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuge where pelicans and grebes and ducks abounded on a shallow sea with the bureaucratically creative name of Sump 1-A. In August the land here is any of a thousand shades of brown. Even most crops are brown as the harvest approaches. Green has faded in the natural landscape and now seems only to mark water courses, pastures,

home sites and the painfully green Indian Camp Golf Course. We crossed Sheepy Ridge where the little herd of pronghorn grazed with cattle. On the north side of Hwy. 161 cattle shared a flooded pasture with White-faced Ibis and Canada Geese. To the south the refuge was dry, cracked and barren. There were no floating rafts of pelicans to distract drivers who would rather be birding. The sky did not fill with a thousand wings at the approach of a low flying harrier.

We drove the wildlife route of the sign proclaiming 20,000 acres are preserved there as wetlands. It says 4 billion cubic feet of water is pumped into the refuge each year. But now the only water is in ditches and canals. The refuge received no water delivery from the local irrigation district this spring or summer, nor will it this fall. Early nesting ducks and other waterfowl may have just fledged their young, but late nesters are surely in trouble as are hundreds of thousands of migrants from the north. Thousands of acres of open water are parched and dry. Marshes are stranded and browning. Ducks flew from muddy ditches as our van churned dust from the levee road. We stopped and saw stagnating pools filled with Gadwalls, Mallards and Coots. The pools were in those same ditches and ended in long ribbons of brown water which faded to mud and eventually to dry broken earth. I've seen the look before I've seen it from a billion years ago on top of the Rocky Mountains where an ancient sea bottom dried and fossilized at that moment when water left the land. Only there it was part of a natural process and a wonder to behold. At Lower Klamath it's a man made catastrophe in the making, one which imperils hundreds of thousands of migrating waterfowl at the heart of the Pacific flyway.

We came to the sign proclaiming a

permanent marsh. The waters should have reflected the pinky gray of distant fires, instead salts accumulated for thousands of years assailed our eyes. Hidden in the middle of this blinding flat were the camouflaged forms of gulls and egrets. Here and there weeds encroached through dark cracks.

We went back another day to assure ourselves it was all true and it was. I thought of the brochure which states:

TAKE PRIDE IN KLAMATH BASIN

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES

Refuge Status is not failsafe protection. Wildlife and their habitats will always be vulnerable to careless public use and abuse. Too often it seems that because these natural resources belong to everyone, they are seen as the responsibility of no one. Refuge managers cannot do their jobs without support from everyone who is committed to the future of wildlife, their habitats and the valuable recreation opportunities they provide.

The problem we face is one of water rights. Local farmers have rights which precede those of the refuge.

In this sixth year of drought push came to shove and the refuge got shoved. As a result the wildlife which would seem to have water rights going back to the ice age and perhaps to previous ice ages have no rights at all.

The Fish and Wildlife Service seems to have its hands tied. So it comes to us again to act to protect our environment. A call or letter to your congressional representative and senators may help bring this matter the attention it so much deserves. Either water rights must be purchased for the Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuges and all other such refuges, or water rights laws must be changed so minimal habitat requirements are assured for wildlife which depend on the tiny parcels of our nation which have been set aside as wildlife refuges.

—DAN MURPHY

CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Now is still time to sign up to be involved in either or both of the Counts sponsored by GGAS. The counts provide useful information on winter bird populations, and the time series being developed is increasingly of interest. Whatever your level of birding ability, there is a place for you. It is fun; come join us.

Packets will be in the mail the first week of November to former participants. If you have not received your packet by the 10th, please call the office. If you did not get out last year, and would like to join us, please call.

OAKLAND

The 1992 Oakland Christmas Count will take place on Sunday, Dec. 20, with a Count Dinner to follow, as is customary, at the Kensington Community Center at 59 Arlington Avenue, Berkeley, The Compilers this year will be Kay Loughman and Janet Wessel.

SAN FRANCISCO

The Tenth Annual San Francisco Christmas Count is to be on Tuesday, Dec. 29. Compilers Dan Murphy, (415) 564-5943, and Alan Hopkins, (415) 664-0983, will carry on again.

The Dinner and Count-down will be at the Hall of Flowers at Golden Gate Park.

YOSEMITE CHRISTMAS COUNT

About now is the time to call for Yosemite reservations if you want to participate in that Christmas Count.

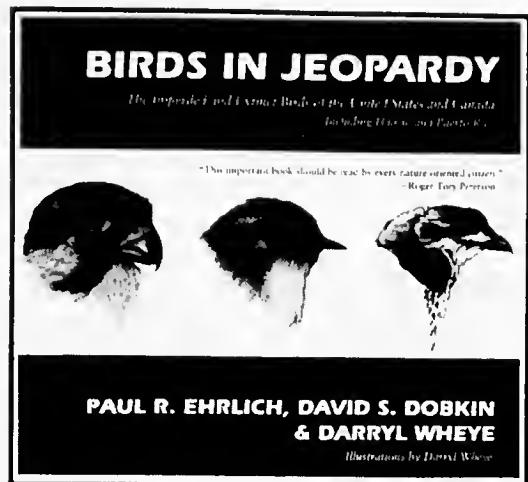
Len McKenzie, Chief Park Interpreter, writes:

“It is indeed scheduled for Dec. 20. An organizational meeting will be held the day before at 5:00 p.m. in the east auditorium of the Valley Visitor Center.

“I appreciate your publicizing the Yosemite count in *The GULL*. I trust the announcement will attract some of your members to the park to participate.

We can't promise the numbers of birds recorded in the Bay Area counts, but you can't beat the setting!"

Note: Because of the conflicting dates Oakland Compiler Kay Loughman adds "It is nice to help in Yosemite, but don't forget your first loyalty is to GGAS!"



SPEAKING OF THE HOLIDAYS

This is to remind you that the GGAS office stocks Audubon Calendars, appointment books, an array of birding books, check lists, field guides, note cards, 75th Anniversary mugs, and other neat things, not to speak of feeders, bird seed, suet cakes, and so on. It is a likely place to shop for the birder on your list.

Hours are 9-12 and 1-4, Tuesday through Friday, but it is advised that you phone before you come to be sure that the office is staffed. Arthur may be off at a meeting, and there may not be a volunteer on hand.

BACK YARD BIRDER

"Timing is everything!" Whoever said that, said a mouthful. The adage applies to millions of occasions in life and is surely a key to successful

birding. A movement out of the corner of your eye rewards you with a fleeting glimpse of a bird seldom seen in your yard. You hear a new bird sound, a sweet gurgling you had never associated with a raucous jay, just because you were sitting quietly in your yard at the right moment. When moving your hose you notice a family of Song Sparrows taking runs through your sprinkler on a hot evening. Most of my most exciting close encounters with birds in the past 20 years have been pure luck, timing, if you will. And many of these have been right in my own back yard.

While baking Christmas cookies one year I glanced out my window at my small pond (not filled since the drought, darn it!). A cloud of at least a dozen Western Bluebirds fluttered down to drink and bathe—a first, and the only time they've paid me a visit. An early Christmas present!

Since the deer suddenly developed a taste for our star jasmine, we had covered them with bird netting. Once again I was at my kitchen window, when I heard furious Wrentit scolding. My heart sank when I saw a Wrentit entangled in the net, its mate trying to encourage it to escape. I crept down the stairs and carefully extricated the trapped bird's feet under the constant supervision and encouraging words of its nervous mate who was hopping around nearby. I dread to think what might have happened if I hadn't recognized alarm calls.

Another rescue involved an Anna's Hummingbird which had flown into the garage where it couldn't escape since the ceiling is higher than the door openings. We used a butterfly net to catch him. As if sensing any kind of struggle would harm him, he became totally limp and rested a few moments on my hand before streaking away. A second hummer became so exhausted he landed on the side of a beam where we simply

picked him up for release.

One of my favorite birthday gifts was the day I "met" a screech owl. It had been perched on a light standard on my deck where I flushed him when I opened the door. He flew to a pine tree where he was unsuccessful in fooling the jays into thinking that he was a pine cone. They immediately formed a gang and harassed him until he flew into a shrub just a few feet from me. His wide eyes signaled his surprise. He clicked his beak at me, blinked a few times and flew silently away. Now when I hear the hootings of Screech Owls on a moonlit night, I have a very clear picture of the bird.

Then there was the day I investigated the screeching of jays to find a struggle between a jay and a Nuttall's Woodpecker. I picked up the dazed woodpecker, the clear loser in the fight and when I tried to remove feathers from his bill, I found that they were stuck onto his tongue which continued to unravel to about 3 inches. What a shock! After a brief rest, he gathered his composure before swooping away. A good reason to see what all the racket is about when the jays are agitated is that you might see something of interest.

Just this summer my perfect timing has allowed me to see several newcomers in my yard. Out my now-famous kitchen window I gave a cursory glance to a plain gray bird, assuming it was a titmouse. Then something struck me as different—it's posture, general body shape and its song. The slim gray bird had a very sharp bill and a conspicuous eye ring. She lingered long enough for me to grab my binos, before wheeing a few notes and flying away. I confirmed it was a female Blue-gray Gnatcatcher—a real treat for me.

My other visitor caught my ear with vaguely familiar-sounding toots. Could it be a Red-breasted Nuthatch? I don't

even have the White-breasted in my yard—no live oaks. But the pine tree next to my deck held a pair of the Red-breasted who were playing a game of tag, chortling all the while. They settled down to search the bark for insects, emitting their tin-horn-like toots. Round and round they went, hanging upside down or hopping down the tree trunk until they joined another group in a nearby conifer.

Since timing does indeed seem to be *everything*, I can only imagine what I've missed over the years!

—MEG PAULETICH

BIRDFEEDERS FOR SHUT-INS

Muriel Leff, San Francisco GGAS member, came forward with an idea which she presented to the board. She proposes a committee of volunteers to visit house-bound people, bringing them bird feeders and a supply of seed.

The condition set by the board in approving it with enthusiasm, was that it be self-sustaining, and not an activity for which the board would take active responsibility.

She has already developed a small fund, and has delivered both seed and hummingbird feeders to several hospices operated by the San Francisco Visiting Nurses Association, and placed some in homes of individuals.

The present need is for volunteers to help place feeders and seed in home situations, and perhaps visit to keep the feeders full and answer questions about the birds seen. If you think this is something you would like to help with please call her. Her phone number is (415) 221-9988. She is the best possible spokesman for "her" project, and will give you additional details.

FALL BIRDING CLASSES IN SAN FRANCISCO

Evening bird classes taught by **Joe Morlan** will start Oct. 28, 29 and Nov. 3. All classes meet 7-9:30 p.m. in room 222, Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore at Bay St. Free parking is in the school lot off Bay St. on the east side of the building.

The instructor is co-author of *Birds of Northern California* and compiler of the recorded "Rare Bird Alert" sponsored by Golden Gate Audubon Society. Slides illustrate all lectures and the text for all classes is *A Field Guide to Birds of North America*, second edition, by the National Geographic Society.

Field Ornithology I meets on Tuesdays. It is an introduction to birds and birding, combining basic field skills with the study of bird ecology, biology and behavior. It starts Nov. 3 and ends Dec. 15.

Field Ornithology II meets on Wednesdays. It is a continuing in-depth study of identification and status of North American water birds, including herons and waterfowl. It starts Oct. 28 and ends Dec. 16.

Field Ornithology III meets on Thursdays. It is a continuing study of land birds including cormorants, alcids, waterfowl and seabirds. It starts Oct. 29 and ends Dec. 17.

These classes are endorsed by GGAS. Optional field trips on weekends may be arranged by the instructor. Please bring binoculars and field guides to class, if you have them.

Fees are \$55 for each seven week course. Pre-registration is recommended. For information call the San Francisco Community College, Community Services Office at (415) 561-1840 or (415) 267-6514.

ANOTHER DAN MURPHY CLASS: CITY BIRDS: A SURVEY OF SAN FRANCISCO'S WINTER BIRDS

From San Francisco's coastal cliffs and beaches, remnant mudflats and marshes of the Bay, to manicured Golden Gate Park and the Presidio, the City provides a critical winter habitat for many of the birds of the Pacific Flyway. The three class sessions and two field trips will be designed to help you identify many of the birds and discover some of those habitats.

Lectures will be held at the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park on Tuesdays from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., November 10, 17 and 24. Field trips will be on Saturday mornings, November 14 and 21. Registration is \$65 for Academy and Audubon members and \$75 for non-members. The special Audubon member price is for this class only. To register enclose a note indicating the name of the class, your name, address, zip and phone number. Include your check and a self-addressed stamped envelope. Mail them to Adult Education, California Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA 94118.

LETTER

To: Roslyn, Penny, Julie and Tom
Subject: The Yellow-faced
Mockingbird*

Many of the nectar and insect loving birds, orioles, hummingbirds, etc. at this time of the year put their bills down the throats of the abundant nectar-laden flowers so much that the sticky pollen gets glued to their faces. Thus is born the Yellow-faced Mocker. The pollen will wear off in a few hours (or days, for an especially thick layer).

Long live scientific curiosity!

—BARBARA NORRIS BEDAYEV

*See *The GULL* for JULY/AUGUST pp. 118-119.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Perhaps there is intended irony that I have missed, but I am quite astonished at John Jencks' letter taking Audubon to task for its failure to emphasize population issues and for choosing to write about the plight of wolves in the Yellowstone area. Audubon, in its fight for the preservation of species and habitat, is one of the few national conservation organizations that has had the temerity to address and advocate population control. "Stabilize Population" might suitably appear on the masthead of Audubon publications, but only to emphasize the fact that overpopulation is an overwhelming worldwide problem that can be solved (or at least relieved) only by making sure that fewer babies are born, not by making sure that no-one else moves to our little patch of turf.

As for wolf habitat vs. bird habitat, how silly to think that they are not one and the same. Addressing the requirements of one species looks to the needs of other species. The whole thrust of the environmental movement has been to recognize the interdependence of all living things; species partisanship has no place in modern-day life, let alone in Audubon.

—ANN DEWART

THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY

For the two hundred who came it was a unanimous success. The food was great, the wine (thanks, George Peyton and Rosenblum Cellers) was special, the company friendly and informal, the atmosphere festive with the music of the "I'll Be Right Home, Honey" band, of which Director David Rice is a prominent member.

President Margolin sketched the chapter's history with excerpts from *The GULL*'s pages, and paid tribute to seventy five years of activism. Activism right from the start, he cited the first issue's announced effort in behalf of licensing of cats. (We've been more successful in most other areas where the chapter has been mobilized to protest, sue, or advocate).

National President Berle, who flew here for the occasion, spoke of his pleasure at the size, activism, professionalism, and contributions of the Audubon movement and of this chapter. His presence was appreciated on this significant occasion.

The special guest of the evening was Paul Ehrlich, Bing Professor of Population Studies at Stanford University, co-author with David Dobkin and Darryl Wheye, of *Birds in Jeopardy*. He is a stimulating and energizing speaker,

In the seconds it takes you to read this sentence, 24 people will be added to the Earth's population.

Before you've finished this page, that number will have reached 1000. Within an hour... 11,000. By day's end... 260,000.

Before you go to bed two nights from now, the net growth in human numbers will be enough to fill a city the size of San Francisco.

It took four million years for humanity to reach the 2 billion mark. Only 30 years to add a third billion. And now we're increasing by 95 million every single year.

No wonder they call it the human race.

ZERO POPULATION GROWTH

and was again, in this setting, though he apologized for preaching to the choir. His remarks were often biting in sarcasm, warmed with humor and sharp in his disappointment with national neglect of the environment and the stark future that threatens if American policy cannot be turned around.

He was available in the social hour after the program to sign copies of his book and for conversation over the birthday cake and coffee.

SORENSEN AND WILSON

The annual GGAS Conservations Awards were presented by Peter Berle. Pete Sorensen, US Fish and Wildlife Service, a good bureaucrat (we have a tendency to forget there are heroes in the state and federal services), was recognized for courageous administration of the Endangered Species Act and his critical role in protecting wildlife in California and the Bay Area. The chapter member recognized was Russ Wilson, for many years of devotion to conservation issues and many an hour at hearings as a spokesman for the chapter. Their names are added to the roll as 1992 recipients of the award. They were presented certificates and copies of Professor Ehrlich's book.

Also selected for congratulations was Arthur Feinstein, retiring from nine years of superb leadership and activism as Conservation Chairman. He was awarded a director's chair emblazoned, Hollywood style, "Conservation Chair." It was presented by Barbara Rivenes. Don Sanford's ten years with *The GULL* was noted by Past President Bruce Walker who presented him with a copy of *Birds in Jeopardy*.

The committee that planned the event deserves our thanks. It was a mellow evening, well done. "Hey, they didn't run out of wine" was reported by Many Observers (mob).

NEWS FROM OUR RANCH

Audubon Canyon Ranch (415) 868-9244
Shoreline Hwy., Stinson Beach, CA 94970

Wildlife Sanctuaries & Centers for Nature Education
under joint sponsorship of Golden Gate, Madrone, Marin
and Sequoia Audubon Societies

Gary Holloway, President

GOLDEN GATE REPRESENTATIVES ON THE AUDUBON CANYON RANCH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Steven Margolin, ex officio
Nicki Spillane

Dan Murphy
Bruce Walker

ANNUAL APPEAL

This is the month we at Audubon Canyon Ranch make our annual appeal for your financial support. As you are no doubt well aware the economy is a mess. The uncertainty of unemployment seems to cast a spell, the certainty of low interest rates binds us and our generally stagnant economy seems to touch each of us. Such conditions certainly have the potential for devastating non-profit corporations like ACR. Let me assure you that ACR remains on a very solid financial footing. But let me assure you too that our revenues are down and our expenses continue to increase.

Recall that like your Audubon chapter, ACR depends on your financial support. ACR was created by dedicated Audubon members from around the Bay Area. Although it was established as an independent non-profit corporation it retains very close links with its sponsoring chapters. Many of us continue to view the Ranch as our chapter's sanctuary.

ACR gets no government support, nor does it receive funding from the National Audubon Society. Our funding comes from you, from investments we have made with some very generous gifts and bequests, and from grants we receive from foundations. But the bedrock is you. Your donations to ACR make our sanctuary one of the most successful non-profit corporations of its kind.

Think about what ACR accomplishes through the generosity of our friends.

It protects about 2000 acres of critical plant and wildlife habitat in Marin and Sonoma counties. It employs three professional biologists dedicated to research and training volunteers. As a result of their efforts we host fall and spring education programs which have reached thousands of Bay Area school children. Our volunteers are not only docents or weekend guides, but include hundreds of others who count birds, plant grasses, fix fences, file books and work very hard as board members and advisors. Can you imagine a board with 40 members and 20 additional advisors which actually functions? Read any book about group dynamics; it just shouldn't work; but it does function effectively and efficiently at ACR. Our staff, our many volunteers and our board members are dedicated to the goal of making ACR the finest organization of its kind. I think we have succeeded. If you know Audubon Canyon Ranch you most probably agree that it is an organization worthy of your support.

With so many non-profit organizations and charities facing a difficult economy I know that you are faced with a difficult decision about where your donations will be directed. If you wish to direct your donation to an organization which effectively preserves the environment, educates and motivates children to achieve an environmental awareness, involves the public in the quest for a deeper understanding of the world around us, do send your tax deductible contribution to Audubon Canyon Ranch. Make your check payable to Audubon Canyon Ranch, and mail it to us at 4900 Highway One, Stinson Beach, CA 94970.

DUNN PROPERTY ACQUIRED BY GGNRA

It was a close one, but funding for acquisition of the Dunn Property was finally approved by both the Senate and

the House. You may recall it is the property between the town of Marshall and our Cypress Grove Preserve. Its pending sale threatened the vision of preserving the east shore of Tomales Bay. Though \$2.1 million was appropriated for a portion of the property last year the remaining \$2 million was not included in this year's budget. Thanks to the work of many letter writers and particularly to ACR Executive Director Skip Schwartz, the appropriation was finally added to the Interior Department budget for the coming year. This assures preservation of much of the Tomales Bay shoreline from development and helps complete the vision of Rep. Phil Burton and the local activists who gave us the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. If you are so inclined, do drop a thank you note to each of our two Senators and to your local congressional representative. They all came together to support this very important appropriation.

FALL SEMINARS (Please register in advance for all seminars and workdays by calling (415) 868-9244)

Saturday, November 7. "Fall Work Day" at Bolinas Lagoon Preserve with the ACR family. (Free) Not only is there no fee for this one, we'll provide a FREE LUNCH if you'll help us prepare for the winter.

Saturday, November 14. "Monarchs!" at Bolinas Lagoon Preserve with Ray Peterson. (\$25) Monarchs are the royal family of butterflies and they are holding court at Bolinas. This is your invitation to an audience with these majestic insects.

Saturday, January 16. "Coastal Prairie Restoration Day" at Cypress Grove Preserve with John Kelly and Kirk Hastings. (Free) This is part of our ongoing effort to restore native grasses to our preserves.

BOUVERIE PRESERVE WALKS

Saturdays, Nov. 14, Dec., 12, and Jan. 9; 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Treat yourself to a free guided nature walk in the lovely Sonoma hills just outside Glen Ellen. It's your chance to enjoy the beauty of the Bouverie Audubon Preserve and learn about the natural history of this very special place.

Reservations are taken as early as the beginning of the month preceding the walk of your choice. Call (707) 938-4554 to reserve your place.

RANCH GUIDE TRAINING

Plan your spring calendar to include a new commitment to the Ranch—become a Ranch Guide. Learn to help us interpret the herony, the ponds and the lagoon for weekend visitors. Our training sessions will begin on February 6 and continue through March 13. The first session will be an orientation session followed by interviews. Call the Ranch for further details.

—DAN MURPHY

GIFTS and BEQUESTS**FOR GGAS****In Memory of**

Delpha de Timofeev
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Gift of

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Daisy Uyeda

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Bernice Biggs
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Jeannette Howard

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G, Berkeley, CA 94702. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

VOLUME 8

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, JULY, 1926

NUMBER 7

THE SURF BIRD'S TRYSTING PLACE—A MYSTERY NO LONGER

In 1785, John Latham, in his "General Synopsis of Birds", iii. p. 180, described a specimen of this little bird, and referred it to the genus *Tringa*, of sandpipers, after which it passed out of sight for many years, until J. K. Townsend secured a single specimen at the mouth of the Columbia, in November, 1836 and sent it to Audubon, who redescribed the species as new, and founded thereon a new genus *Aphriza*, by which name it is still known, with the specific title of *virgata*. It has been noted since that time, with greater or less frequency, until its status is described by Dr. Joseph Grinnell as that of a "fairly common spring and fall migrant on rocky portions of the seashore." Notwithstanding its occurrence along the entire stretch of the coast from northwestern Alaska to the straits of Magellan, nothing has been definitely known of its life history or breeding habits, except its conduct when flirting with the surf and feeding along the rocks. In Newton's Dictionary of Birds, 1896, Dr. R. W. Shufeldt refers to statements made by the natives to Dr. Nelson, that the bird nested on the bare mountains of the interior of Alaska, which however were not given full credence. This statement received a vague degree of corroboration when Dr. Grinnell, during his exploration of the Kotzebue Sound region, in 1899, where the Arctic Circle cuts the northwestern coast of Alaska, secured three specimens some forty miles inland, and natives who recognized the birds stated that they nested in the tundra of the mountainous country further inland.

Twenty-seven years more have elapsed, so that, for one hundred forty-two years since John Latham first described him, *Aphriza virgata* has gamboled along the full length of the Pacific coast of the two Americas, with the secret of his nesting grounds locked within his wise little head. It has been reserved for Mr. Joseph Dixon, Economic Mammologist of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology of the University of California and Honorary Member of the Association, accompanied by Mr. George Wright, Member of the Association since its organization, to encounter the surf bird at home on its nest, above timber line on Mount McKinley, 150 miles from the coast. Mr. Wright tells the story briefly, thus:

"The long-sought-for eggs of the surf bird have been found. It seemed almost wrong to look at the nest, thus robbing the bird of a secret it has jealously guarded for so many years.

"The nest was placed in a little saddle on the barren mountain at about 4,000 feet altitude, which is high above timber-line. It was placed in the bare rocky tundra, with only a few lichens for lining.

"The four unbelievably large eggs were of a buffy ground color, with an abundance of chocolate brown markings and violet under-markings. They lay there with small ends placed very symmetrically together, just the loveliest things you have ever imagined.

"Mr. Surf Bird was the bravest little father you ever saw. He would let us put our hands within ten inches of him when he would suddenly spring into the air right at our faces. At other times he slid right onto the eggs while the tripod loomed over the nest. * * *

Our members will all rejoice that this merited good fortune has come to two gentlemen whom we are happy and proud to have as associates and good friends.

A. S. KIRBE.

THERE'S HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

We were pleased to receive the letter below from an enthusiastic young birder in response to our appeal for volunteers. There is hope for the future.

There is also need for more of you (see p. 135, *The GULL* for September).

to send in a response to Arthur Feinstein's call for help. One specific thing that is needed is help with the phones and routine office tasks like stuffing envelopes. Your inquiries are invited. Our sincere thanks to those of you who did respond, and please, let's hear from some more.

9-3-92

GiGAS -



Since I am still in high school and tend to have loads of homework, I have trouble finding time to do a lot of the things I would like to do. I would love to help the GiGAS, but I don't have much free time. I will try to make it to some of the field trips, and I would love to do the Christmas Bird Count. I just joined the GiGAS, and I will try to get as involved as possible. I love the Gull and can't wait to attend field trips. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,
Lily Douglas

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY ROSTER



THE GULL

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PLEASE EXPEDITE—TIME VALUE

